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Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12 NEA-09 RSC-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 219

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UNGA
SUBJ: 29TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY WRAP UP

SUMMARY: THE 29TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY SAW FURTHER INTENSIFICATION OF THIRD WORLD COHESION AND MILITANCY ON ISSUES CONCERNING SOUTHERN AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF ALGERIA, THIS YEAR IN CONTROL OF THE MACHINERY OF BOTH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, THE NON-ALIGNED MAJORITY DETERMINED THE ASSEMBLY'S POSITION IN THESE THREE AREAS WITHOUT SERIOUS REFERENCE TO THE VIEWS OF OTHER MEMBER STATES, OR INDEED TO THOSE OF MODERATES WITHIN THEIR OWN GROUP. THE RESULTS WERE, AS COULD BE EXPECTED, SERIOUSLY DETRIMENTAL TO US INTERESTS IN THE UN, AND TO THE UN'S IMAGE IN THE US.

ON ISSUES OTHER THAN THOSE JUST MENTIONED, THE NON-ALIGNED LEADERSHIP EITHER DID NOT TRY, OR TIRED BUT FAILED TO MOBILIZE THEIR MEMBERS IN SUFFICIENT NUMBERS TO FORM A MAJORITY. THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES WERE ABLE TO WIN CLEAR CUT VICTORIES ON THE KOREA AND KHMER ISSUES, ALTHOUGH ONLY BY THE THINNEST OF MARGINS, AND AFTER A MAJOR EXPENDITURE
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OF DIPLOMATIC CAPITAL. A NUMBER OF MEASURES WITH WHICH

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THE UNITED STATES WAS CLOSELY IDENTIFIED MET NO CONCERTED
NON-ALIGNED OPPOSITION, AND INDEED ON OCCASION RECEIVED THEIR
SUPPORT. THESE INCLUDED THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
ROME WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE, THE WORLD POPULATION PLAN
OF ACTION, AND US INITIATIVES TO STRENGTHEN THE UNITED
NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF OFFICE, TO IMPROVE THE STATUS
OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND TO HELP ACCOUNT
FOR PEOPLE MISSION IN ACTION . ALTHOUGH THE ASSEMBLY WITH
SUBSTANTIAL WEO SUPPORT OVERRODE US OBJECTIONS TO A SALARY INCREASE
FOR UNITED NATIONS STAFF, IT OTHERWISE RESISTED
FISCALLY IRRESPONSIBLE MEASURES, WHILE RENEWING ITS
PROVISIONS FOR THE FINANCING OF UNEF AND UNDOF. ON
DISARMAMENT ISSUES THE ASSEMBLY OVERRODE THE OBJECTIONS
OF CHINA AND THIRD WORLD NATIONS LIKE INDIA, AND ADOPTED
FIRM RESOLUTIONS ON NONPROLIFERATION.

AS A RESULT OF DECISIONS TAKEN DURING BOTH THE 28TH
AND 29TH GA, THE UNITED NATIONS MAY IN THE COMING YEAR
TURN INCREASINGLY INWARD AS IT UNDERTAKES A PROCESS OF
CHARTER AND ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW.

THERE ARE TENTATIVE SIGNS THAT THE WESTERN MEMBER
NATIONS ARE BECOMING MORE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED OVER THEIR
LOSS OF INFLUENCE IN THE ASSEMBLY, THAT THE SOVIET BLOC
IS ALSO BECOMING ALARMED OVER THE LENGTHS TO WHICH THE
NON-ALIGNED HAVE GONE, AND THAT SOME OF THE THIRD WORLD
MEMBERS THEMSELVES REALLIZE THAT THERE ARE LIMITS BEYOND
WHICH WESTERN AND INDUSTRIALIZED MINORITY CAN NOT
BE PUSHED WITHOUT REPERCUSSIONS DAMAGING TO THIRD WORLD
INTERESTS, INCLUDING THEIR INTEREST IN AN EFFECTIVE UN.
UNTIL THERE IS FURTHER EVIDENCE HOWEVER OF A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION
IN NON-ALIGNED MILITANCY OR COHESION WESTERN INFLUENCE
IN THE ASSEMBLY WILL CONTINUE TO ERODE.

1. KHMER AND KOREA. THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ASIAN
ALLIES (WHO TOOK THE LEAD IN THE KHMER ISSUE) SUCCEEDED
IN PRESERVING THE GKR SEAT IN THE UNITED NATIONS, AND
PREVENTED THE ASSEMBLY FROM CALLING FOR UNCONDITIONAL
DISSOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND IN A SERIES OF
EXTREMELY CLOSE VOTES. ROUNDING UP THE NECESSARY VOTES ON
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BOTH THESE ISSUES REQUIRED MAJOR SUSTAINED EFFORTS BOTH HERE
AND IN FOREIGN CAPITALS, AND IN BOTH CASES, HAVE WON ONLY A
REPRIEVE. BOTH ISSUES REMAIN FIRMLY WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS
SYSTEM, WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL ASKED BY THE ASSEMBLY
TO FACILITATE A SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA, REPORTING ON
HIS EFFORTS TO THE 30TH GA, WHILE THE KOREA ISSUE IS
PASSED TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL WITH THE MANDATE TO WORK
WITH THE PARTIES CONCERNED TOWARD THE DISSOLUTION

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OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND. IN THE
ABSENCE OF PROGRESS TOWARD THE RESOLUTION OF THESE
ISSUES THEY WILL BE BACK IN THE ASSEMBLY NEXT FALL.

2. SOUTH AFRICA. THE FOCUS OF ACTION ON SOUTH AFRICA
SHIFTED BETWEEN THE ASSEMBLY AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL
THROUGHOUT THE 29TH GA. THE ASSEMBLY IN ADDITION TO
VOTING NOT TO ACCEPT SOUTH AFRICA'S CREDENTIALS, AS IT
HAD DONE EACH YEAR SINCE 1970, ALSO ASKED THE SECURITY
COUNCIL TO CONSIDER SOUTH AFRICA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH
THE UN. THE US, UK AND FRANCE TRIPLE VETOED A RESOLUTION IN
THE SECURITY COUNCIL, EXPELLING SOUTH AFRICA. THE
SECURITY COUNCIL REPORTED TO THE ASSEMBLY ITS FAILURE
TO AGREE ON ACTION TO IMPLEMENT THE ASSEMBLY'S
RECOMMENDATION, AT WHICH POINT GA PRESIDENT BOUTEFLIKA
RULED THAT THE ASSEMBLY'S NONACCEPTANCE OF SOUTH
AFRICA'S CREDENTIALS HAD THE EFFECT OF SUSPENDING IT
FROM FURTHER PARTICIPATION IN THE 29TH GA. THE US,
UK AND FRENCH OBJECTED TO BOUTEFLIKA'S RULING, THE THE RULING
WAS UPHELD BY THE ASSEMBLY 91-22 WITH 19 ABSTENTIONS.

3. THE FOCUS OF ACTION ON SOUTH AFRICA MOVED BACK INTO THE
SECURITY COUNCIL IN DECEMBER WITH THE AFRICANS SHOWING
A NEW INTEREST IN SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS AMONG SC MEMBERS.
THE SECURITY COUNCIL AGREED UNANIMOUSLY TO CALL ON SOUTH AFRICA TO
MOVE EXPEDITIOUSLY TOWARD SELF DETERMINATION IN NAMIBIA,
AND PROMISED TO REVIEW SOUTH AFRICA'S PERFORMANCE ON
THIS ISSUE SIX MONTHS HENCE.

4. PALESTINE. THE ASSEMBLY OPENED THIS ISSUE BY
INVITING THE PLO TO PARTICIPATE IN ITS DEBATE AS "THE
REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE", THEN
ACCORDED ARAFAT THE RECEPTION NORMALLY RESERVED FOR
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HEADS OF STATE, AND CONCLUDED BY ADOPTING RESOLUTIONS
GRANTING THE PLO OBSERVER STATUS, RECOGNIZING THE
PALESTINIANS' RIGHTS TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND NATIONAL
INDEPENDENCE, WHILE MAKING NO MENTION OF THE RIGHT OF
ISRAEL TO A NATIONAL EXISTANCE. IN THE COURSE OF THIS
DEBATE PRESIDENT BOUTEFLIKA RULED THAT EACH MEMBER,
INCLUDING ISRAEL (WHICH HAD CONTRARY TO PRECEDENT IN-
SCRIBED TO SPEAK EACH DAY OF THE DEBATE), BE LIMITED TO
ONE STATEMENT, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT RESTRICT ISRAEL'S
RIGHT TO TAKE THE FLOOR AT THE CONCLUSION OF EACH DAY'S
SESSION TO EXERCISE ITS "RIGHT OF REPLY". BOUTEFLIKA'S
RULING WAS CHALLENGED BUT WAS UPHELD BY THE ASSEMBLY AS
A WHOLE.

5. SUPPORTERS OF THESE DECISIONS DEFENDED THEM BY

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INSISTING THAT GREATER INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION WOULD
HAVE A MODERATING EFFECT ON THE PLO, AND NOTING THAT
THIS YEAR'S ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION MERELY COUNTERBALANCED
EARLIER UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT
OF ISRAEL, BUT NOT THAT OF THE PALESTINIANS, TO A
NATIONAL EXISTENCE. WHILE THIS YEAR'S ASSEMBLY DEBATE
DID NOT DERAIL THE STEP BY STEP MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATING
PROCESS NOR DESCREDIT THE US AS MEDIATOR, IT CERTAINLY
HAD A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE NEGOTIATING CLIMATE AND AROUSED
IMPORTANT SEGMENTS OF AMERICAN OPINION AGAINST THE UN.

6. THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES. THE
UNITED STATES MADE EVERY EFFORT PRIOR TO, AND THROUGHOUT
THE ASSEMBLY, TO NEGOTIATE A CHARTER WE COULD SUPPORT.
THE REFUSAL OF KEY NON-ALIGNED DELEGATIONS TO COMPROMISE
ON THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES (E.G., NATIONALIZATION,
INDEXATION, CARTELS) AND THE EQUALLY ADAMANT REFUSAL OF
MEXICO TO CONSIDER EXTENDING NEGOTIATIONS
BEYOND THE CLOSE OF THE ASSEMBLY DOOMED ALL HOPE OF
AGREEMENT ON A GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE CHARTER. THE
UNITED STATES DID SUCCEED HOWEVER IN DEVELOPING AND
MAINTAINING SUBSTANTIAL OPPOSITION AMONG THE MAJOR INDUSTRIALIZED
POWERS TO THE CHARTER, THEREBY HELPING TO MINIMIZE ITS
IMPACT ON FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS (6 MEMBERS VOTED AGAINST,
INCLUDING THE US, AND A MAJORITY OF THE EC-9, UK AND FRG,
WHILE 10 ABSTAINED, AND 120 VOTED FOR).
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7. OTHER ECONOMIC ISSUES. GENERAL DEBATE OFFERED PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER AN EXCELLENT PLATFORM FOR FOCUSING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION ON THE WORLD FOOD AND ENERGY CRISIS, ALTHOUGH FEW OTHER SPEAKERS WERE WILLING TO FOLLOW THIS LEAD. NON-ALIGNED EFFORTS TO FURTHER ENSHRINE THE 6TH SPECIAL SESSION'S NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER AS UNITED NATIONS DOCTRINE MADE LITTLE HEADWAY DURING THE 29TH GA, LARGELY DUE TO VIGOROUS AND CONSISTENT US OPPOSITION. A GOOD DEAL OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE'S TIME WAS WASTED DISCUSSING THE STRUCTURE FOR A UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL FUND FOR THE "MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED", TO WHICH NO ONE APPEARS WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE, AND ON WHOSE GOVERNING BOARD THE UNITED STATES HAS DECLINED TO SIT. THE ASSEMBLY ADOPTED, WITHOUT SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE, THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RECENT WORLD FOOD AND POPULATION CONFERENCES. UNITED STATES INITIATIVES FOR STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF OFFICE AND IMPROVING THE STATUS OF WOEMN IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM WERE VERY WELL RECEIVED, AND ADOPTED WITHOUT DIFFICULTY.

8. UNITED NATIONS BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION. WESTERN COOPERATION ON THESE ISSUES WAS GENERALLY EXCELLENT. EASTERN EUROPEAN VIEWS COINCIDED WITH OUR OWN ON A CONFIDENTIAL

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NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, WHILE THE NON-ALIGNED MADE LITTLE EFFORT TO CONCERT THEIR POSITIONS. CUBAN INSPIRED INFLATION AND CURRENCY ISSUES DIRECTED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES WERE DEFEATED. THE ASSEMBLY AGREED ON UNEF-UNDOF FINANCING WITHOUT REVISING THE SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS AGREED DURING THE 28TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THE UNITED STATES SUCCEEDED IN BLOCKING CHANGES PROPOSED BY THE SYG IN THE NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF JOBS WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT WHICH MIGHT HAVE REDUCED OUR QUOTA OF UN POSITIONS. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, THE UNITED STATES WAS FORCED TO AGREE TO AN EXCESSIVELY HIGH REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR PEACEKEEPING CONTINGENTS, AND WAS UNABLE TO BLOCK WHAT WE FELT TO BE AN UNJUS-TIFIED 6 0/0 INCREASE IN UNITED NATIONS STAFF SALARIES.

9. "THE GREAT DEBATE". TOWARD THE END OF THE SESSION

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AMB. SCALI ADDRESSED THE ASSEMBLY ON OUR GROWING CONCERN WITH A DEVELOPING TREND TOWARD UNFAIR AND UNREALISTIC RESOLUTIONS, AND WITH VOTES AND RULINGS WHICH DISREGARD THE TRADITIONS AND CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS. MORE BY CONINCIDENCE THAN BY DESIGN SEVERAL WEO DELEGATIONS, INCLUDING FRANCE, UK AND THE FRG JOINED IN THIS CRITICISM. THESE STATEMENTS, AND PARTICULARLY THAT OF AMB. SCALI, TOUCHED OFF AN EXTENSIVE BUT FAIRLY REASONED AND MODERATE RESPONSE FROM THE THIRD WORLD. FIFTY DELEGATIONS EVENTUALLY JOINED IN WHAT BECAME A SPIRITED AND OFTEN THOUGHTFUL DEBATE ON ISSUES FUNDAMENTAL TO THE UN'S FUTURE. EVERYONE AGREED THAT THE UN EXISTED TO FURTHER ORDERLY CHANGE. THE US AND THE WEO'S NATURALLY TENDED TO EMPHASIZE ORDER, WHILE THE THIRD WORLD PUT ITS STRESS ON THE NEED FOR THE UN TO PROMOTE CHANGE, AND TO REFLECT THE CHANGES WHICH HAVE ALREADY OCCURRED IN THE WORLD SINCE ITS FOUNDING.

10. REVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM. IN THE COMING MONTHS NON-ALIGNED ATTENTION MAY TURN FROM REORDERING THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO REORGANIZING THE UNITED NATIONS ITSELF, AS THE ORGANIZATION EMBARKS ON A SERIES OF INTERNAL REVIEWS AND APPRAISALS. IN ONE OF ITS POTENTIALLY MOST TROUBLESOME DECISIONS THE 29TH GA ESTABLISHED A COMMITTEE OF 43 NATIONS TO REVIEW THE CONFIDENTIAL

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UNITED NATIONS CHARTER AND REPORT TO THE 30TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY. COMING FORWARD AT THE SAME TIME WILL BE PREPARATIONS FOR A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SCHEDULED TO MEET IN SEPTEMBER OF THIS YEAR, JUST PRIOR TO OPENING OF THE 30TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THIS SESSION WAS CALLED FOR BY THE 28TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY WITH A MANDATE TO REVIEW THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AS IT CONTRIBUTES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. SINCE NEARLY ALL UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMS AND AGENCIES CONTRIBUTE IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER TO DEVELOPMENT, THIS REVIEW IS LIKELY TO COVER A GOOD DEAL OF GROUND.

11. BOTH OF THESE EXERCISES WILL GO FORWARD MORE OR LESS SIMULTANEOUSLY, BOTH WILL REQUIRE THAT WE EITHER REACT TO PROPOSALS FROM OTHERS WHICH WE ARE LIKELY TO FIND MORE OFTEN THAN NOT TO BE UNACCEPTABLE, OR THAT WE ATTEMPT TO FOCUS DISCUSSION ON A SERIES OF MORE CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS OF OUR OWN. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE NEGATIVE POSITION WE WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO TAKE ON CHARTER REVISION CAN IN PART BE OFFSET BY A MORE OPEN APPROACH TO STRUCTURAL REORGANIZATION.

12. COMMENT. GREATEST ATTENTION DURING THE 29TH

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY WAS FOCUSED ON THE PALESTINE DEBATE
IN WHICH THE ARABS USED THE ASSEMBLY TO RATIFY THE
DECISIONS THEY HAD TAKEN AT THE RABAT CONFERENCE, TO
HELP LEGITIMIZE THE PLO, AND TO ESTABLISH A COUNTERWEIGHT
TO THE MANY PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS WHICH HAD RECOGNIZED
ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO NATIONAL EXISTENCE BUT NOT THAT OF
THE PALESTINIANS. THE OVERALL EFFECT OF THIS DEBATE
WAS TO MAKE MORE DIFFICULT THE STEP BY STEP APPROACH
TO MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS WHICH THE UNITED STATES
SUPPORTS, WHILE GENERATING A HEATED ANTI UNITED NATIONS
REACTION AMONG LARGE SECTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES
PUBLIC AND CONGRESS. THE ASSEMBLY'S SUSPENSION OF
SOUTH AFRICA ALSO AROUSED A VERY NEGATIVE REACTION IN
THE US, AT LEAST IN PART BECAUSE OF THE PRECEDENT IT
APPEARED TO OFFER FOR SIMILAR EXCLUSIONARY ACTION AGAINST
ISRAEL AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE. THE VOTE ON THE
CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS ADDED TO THE NEGATIVE
CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC REACTION TO THE 29TH GA.
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13. THE 29TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY ALSO TOOK A NUMBER OF
IMPORTANT POSITIVE ACTION WHICH REFLECT THE CONTINUING INFLUENCE
OF THE UNITED STATES THEREIN. THESE ACTIONS INCLUDED
MEASURES IN THE FOOD, POPULATION, AND PEACEKEEPING
FIELDS, AND THE REJECTION OF HOSTILE RESOLUTIONS ON
KOREA AND KHMER.

14. THE CLOSING WEEKS OF THE ASSEMBLY SAW A FEW
TENTATIVE BUT HOPEFUL SIGNS THAT THE DECLINE OF US
AND WESTERN INFLUENCE IN THE ASSEMBLY MIGHT BE ARRESTED.
WESTERN EUROPEAN DELEGATIONS SHOWED IN THE "GREAT
DEBATE" ON THE UNITED NATIONS' FUTURE, THE VOTE ON
THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS, AND IN RECENT
PROCEDURAL MANEUVERING A NEW RESOLVE TO STAND UP TO
THE NON-ALIGNED, AND AN INCREASED DESIRE TO COOPERATE
WITH US AN AMONG THEMSELVES IN DOING SL.

15. THE SOVIET BLOC, WHICH HAD HITHERTO ENCOURAGED AND
SUPPORTED THE NON-ALIGNED IN ALL OF THEIR EXCESSES, NOTABLY
REFRAINED FROM TAKING SIDES IN THE OTHERWISE GENERAL
"GREAT DEBATE" IN THE CLOSING DAYS OF THE ASSEMBLY
THE SOVIET DELEGATION PUBLICLY AND FORECEFULLY OPPOSED
ANY EFFORT AT CHARTER REVISION, AND PRIVATELY SHOWED
AN INCREASED INTEREST IN COOPERATING WITH THE US TO
PROTECT GREAT POWER PREROGATIVES IN THE UN.

16 THE NON-ALIGNED INCLUDING BOUTEFLIKA APPEARED TO
MODERATE THEIR MORE MILITANT PUBLIC STATEMENTS TOWARD THE
CLOSE OF THE ASSEMBLY. DURING DECEMBER'S SECURITY COUNCIL

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CONSIDERATION ON NAMIBIA THE AFRICANS DEMONSTRATED A
NEW WILLINGENSS TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY ON THIS ISSUE.

17. THESE SIGNS REMAIN ONLY INSUBSTANTIAL STRAWS IN
THE WIND. THERE IS AS YET NO HARD EVIDENCE OF ANY
SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN NON-ALIGNED MILITANCY OR
COHESION. FOR THE THIRD WORLD THE US REMAINS IDENTIFIED WITH
STATUS QUO IN THE MIDDLE EAST, SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND
THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER, WHILE THE
UN IS SEEN AS ONE OF THEIR MOST EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENTS
FOR CHANGING THESE SITUATIONS. THE EROSION OF US AND
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WESTERN INFLUENCE IN THE ASSEMBLY MAY BE SLOWED BY
FIRM AND CONCERTED ACTION, BUT IT CAN NOT BE REVERSED
UNTIL COOPERATION IN THESE KEY ISSUES CAN BE SHOWN TO
BE MORE PROFITABLE THAN CONFRONTATION.
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